

DEMANDS OF THE SPANISH SPEAKING COMMUNITY OF NEWARK* TO THE U.C.C.

The U.C.C. has been delegated by law to find and implement solutions to the problems of poverty in Newark. The Spanish-speaking community constitutes 25% of the poor of Newark and from 10% to 15% of the total population.

In addressing itself to the problems of the poor Spanish-speaking community, the U.C.C. has shown a LACK OF SENSITIVITY to, and KNOWLEDGE, and UNDERSTANDING of the UNIQUE PROBLEMS that this segment of the poor community have, and that REQUIRE SPECIAL ATTENTION AND HANDLING. The officials of the U.C.C. have been operating under the illusion that programs that serve the total poor community will also serve the Spanish-speaking community. The results of 4 years of operating in this manner testify to the fallacy of this assumption. This approach has resulted in "DE FACTO" EXCLUSION OF THE SPANISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY FROM THE MAJORITY OF ANTI-POVERTY PROGRAMS. The U.C.C. justifies its exclusion policy by attributing the lack of participation of the Spanish-speaking community to apathy and indifference on the part of that community.

The Spanish-speaking community will not tolerate this situation any longer. In this 4th anniversary of the U.C.C., we ask for a CHANGE as to the way U.C.C. relates to the Spanish-speaking community.

1. The Board of Directors of U.C.C. must have six representatives from the Spanish-speaking community.
2. The staff of U.C.C. must have Spanish-speaking personnel at all levels who are "simpatico" to the plight of the Spanish speaking poor. A new position, Associate Director, should be established for a member of the Spanish-speaking community.
3. As a condition for approval of funding from U.C.C., delegate agencies must include on their BOARDS and STAFF PROPORTIONAL (not token) REPRESENTATION OF Spanish-speaking persons. (Staff at all levels, executive, professionals, clerical, para-professionals.)
4. F.O.C.U.S., in spite of the recent additional funds procured from the Dept. of Community Affairs, needs additional monies to implement programs of basic adult education, leadership training programs, and community action programs.
5. The Spanish-speaking community wants a statistical report, showing the extent of the participation of the Spanish-speaking community in all U.C.C. and delegate agencies programs. This report should include data of those receiving and administering the service. (This report to be channeled to the community thru F.O.C.U.S.)
6. We ask the U.C.C. to shed its timidity and be more vocal in using its influence and resources to move State, County and City Government, private and public agencies to bring about responsive and sensitive behavior toward all people.

*The great majority of the poor from the Spanish-speaking community are Puerto Ricans.

This statement was prepared under the direction of 30 Spanish-speaking community leaders of Newark at a meeting held on February 5, 1969, for this purpose. Rev. Fr. Mario and Miss Hilda Hidalgo were delegated the responsibility for drafting this document.